



## **NJDOE News**

**For More Information Contact the Public Information Office:**

**Richard Vespucci**  
**Kathryn Forsyth, Director**  
**609-292-1126**

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### **Patten School in Perth Amboy and Bloomfield Tech Honored as Title I Distinguished Schools**

New Jersey's two 2007 Title I Distinguished Schools, Edward J. Patten Elementary School in Perth Amboy and the Essex County Vocational and Technical High School Bloomfield Campus, were recognized at the New Jersey Association of Federal Program Administrators Spring Training Institute today in Atlantic City.

The two schools, along with other Title I Distinguished Schools from around the country, were formally honored in February at the National Association of State Title I Directors (NASTID) conference in Nashville, Tennessee.

"These two schools have been recognized for the extraordinary effort they have made to improve the academic achievement levels of their students," said Education Commissioner Lucille E. Davy. "They serve as an example for other Title I schools throughout the state."

In order to be considered for the Distinguished School honor, a school receiving federal Title I funds must have a minimum school poverty rate of 35 percent and student achievement data demonstrating a high level of success. The school must have met or exceeded the *No Child Left Behind* (NCLB) adequate yearly progress targets for two consecutive years.

Finalists for the awards are identified based on a DOE analysis of their state test data. Each school's demographics, academic and extracurricular programs and student achievement history are then evaluated. Site visits are conducted by DOE staff.

The winning schools are selected for their overall effectiveness in curriculum and instruction, professional development, partnerships with families and communities and other factors contributing to their extraordinary student success. The schools receive plaques from DOE and NASTID, and the principals receive a monetary award of \$1,000 each to be used in continuing the school's academic achievement efforts.

#### **Edward J. Patten Elementary School, Perth Amboy** **Joyce DeFeo, Principal**

Edward J. Patten Elementary School is a K-4 school with a student population of 745. Eighty-eight percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch. Ninety-seven percent of the student population is classified as minority, with 18% limited English proficient.

The school has aligned its curriculum with the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards and 100% of the classroom teachers are highly qualified. Staff development activities promoting and encouraging professional growth take place regularly throughout the school year. These trainings are based on needs identified within the building and at the district level.

The school uses a balanced literacy program incorporating the Four-Blocks Literacy Model implemented during a 90-minute uninterrupted reading block. The math program is a comprehensive approach to learning and discovery relying heavily on manipulatives and hands-on activities.

An emphasis on language arts literacy led to the establishment of a Family Literacy Center library that houses approximately 1,000 donated books for parents to check out to read at home. Parents are given the opportunity to participate in standards-based programs presenting strategies for assisting children at home. Workshops with an emphasis on family and child social-emotional growth and development also take place throughout the year. Parents and children are also offered a Saturday Morning Family School program, which provides academic, social and enrichment courses, and activities for students and their families.

The school has made all of its adequate yearly progress indicators.

Through the commitment, dedication, and collaboration of all stakeholders in the lives of their students, the staff at Patten continue to move forward with fulfilling their mission, which states, "The Edward J. Patten Elementary School, in collaboration with the school community, will instill the love of learning in all children with the motivation to grow for the rest of their lives."

**Essex County Vocational Technical High Schools - Bloomfield Tech Campus, Bloomfield**  
**Eric Love, Principal**

Essex County Vocational Technical High Schools-Bloomfield Tech Campus is part of the oldest vocational and technical school system in New Jersey. The Bloomfield Tech campus location has been in existence since 1930 and during that time has served students from most Essex County municipalities.

About 500 students currently attend the school, the majority of whom reside in urban areas. More than 80 percent of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Recent strategies to improve instruction have been the institution of 80-minute blocks of instructional time for English and math for all ninth- and eleventh-graders. Other strategies have included the use of before- and after-school classes for those eleventh-grade students who have been identified as needing extra help in English and math.

Another important factor in the success of Bloomfield Tech has been the importance placed on student attendance. Each day, guidance counselors make calls to the parents of students who are absent and inquire why the student is not in school.

Meeting the school's *NCLB* goals is accomplished through the continued hard work of the dedicated staff, parents and hard-working students of the Bloomfield Tech.

The Bloomfield Tech campus has consistently made adequate yearly progress for the past four school years. Students taking the HSPA recently achieved a district record of 96.4 percent passing rate in language arts and a passing rate of 77.7 percent in math.

In November of 2007, Bloomfield Tech was recognized as a Bronze award winner in the *US News and World Reports* list of the best high schools in the United States.